

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A portable information apparatus comprising:  
a main display;  
a sub-display provided independently of the main  
5 display;

a detection device detecting an operating state of  
the portable information apparatus; and

a display control device displaying a message  
indicating an abnormal state of the portable  
10 information apparatus on the sub-display when the  
detection device detects the abnormal state of the  
portable information apparatus.

2. An apparatus according to claim 1, further  
comprising a designation device designating display  
15 modes of messages to be displayed on the sub-display  
every messages, and

wherein the display control device displays the  
message indicating the abnormal state of the portable  
information apparatus on the sub-display on the basis  
20 of the display mode corresponding to the message  
indicating the abnormal state of the portable  
information apparatus designated by the designation  
device.

3. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the  
25 display control device re-displays contents displayed  
on the sub-display before the message is displayed,  
when a predetermined time has passed after the message

is displayed on the sub-display.

4. An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a display device displaying a setup window used to set at least one of a display time and contents of the message every messages on the main display, and  
5 wherein the display control device displays the message on the basis of a setup value set on the setup window, corresponding to the message, on the main display.

10 5. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the sub-display is provided at a position of a main body of the portable information apparatus where the sub-display is externally observable even when the main display is closed with respect to the main body.

15 6. An apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the sub-display is provided at a front end of the main body.

7. An apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the sub-display is provided at a rear end of the main body.

20 8. An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an open/close state detecting device detecting an open/close state of the main display with respect to the main body,

25 wherein the display control device displays the detected information to be notified of user on the sub-display where the open/close state detecting device detects that the main display is closed with respect to

the main body instead of the name of the application  
program displayed on the sub-display and displays the  
detected information to be notified of user on the main  
display where the open/close state detecting device  
5 detects that the main display is opened with respect to  
the main body.

9. A portable information apparatus comprising:  
a main display;  
a sub-display provided independently of the main  
10 display;  
an operation device generating a plurality of  
types of events; and  
a display control device displaying a name of an  
application program to be started on the sub-display in  
15 response to an event for changing the name of  
application program from the operation device instead  
of a name of other application program to be started  
displayed on the sub display in one of a power OFF  
state, sleep state, and main display OFF state.

20 10. An apparatus according to claim 9, wherein an  
application corresponding to the name of application to  
be started displayed on the sub-display is started in  
response to an event for starting by the operation  
device.

25 11. An apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the  
display control device, in the power OFF state, sleep  
state, and main display OFF state, normally displays

information representing a state of the portable  
information apparatus on the sub-display and if an  
event for displaying the name of the application  
program to be started is generated from the operation  
5 device, the display control device displays the name of  
the application program to be started on the sub-  
display.

12. An apparatus according to claim 11, wherein  
the display control device re-displays the information  
10 representing the state of the portable information  
apparatus on the sub-display when a predetermined time  
has passed after the display control device displays  
the name of the application program to be started on  
the sub-display.

13. An apparatus according to claim 9, further  
15 comprising a detection device detecting an operating  
state of the portable information apparatus, and

wherein the display control device displays a  
message indicating an abnormal state of the portable  
20 information apparatus on the sub-display instead of the  
name of the application program to be started, when the  
detection means detects the abnormal state of the  
portable information apparatus.

14. An apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the  
25 sub-display is provided at a position of the main body  
of the portable information apparatus where the  
sub-display is externally observable even when the main

display is closed with respect to the main body.

15. An apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising:

5 a detecting device detecting an operating state of the portable information apparatus; and

an open/close state detecting device detecting an open/close state of the main display with respect to the main body,

10 wherein the display control device displays the detected information to be notified of user on the sub-display where the open/close state detecting device detects that the main display is closed with respect to the main body instead of the name of the application program displayed on the sub-display and displays the  
15 detected information to be notified of user on the main display where the open/close state detecting device detects that the main display is opened with respect to the main body.

20 16. An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein when the display device displays the detected information to be notified of user on the main display, a new window to display the information to be notified of user is opened.

25 17. An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the sub-display is provided at a front end of the main body.

18. An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein

the sub-display is provided at a rear end of the main body.

19. A message display method for a portable information apparatus, which comprises a main display,  
5 and a sub-display provided independently of the main display, comprising:

detecting an operating state of the portable information apparatus; and

10 displaying a message indicating an abnormal state of the portable information apparatus on the sub-display when the abnormal state of the portable information apparatus.

20. A method according to claim 19, further comprising designating display modes of messages to be  
15 displayed on the sub-display every messages, and

wherein the message indicating the abnormal state of the portable information apparatus is displayed on the sub-display on the basis of the display mode corresponding to the message indicating the abnormal  
20 state of the portable information apparatus.

21. A method according to claim 19, further comprising re-displaying contents displayed on the sub-display before the message is displayed, when a predetermined time has passed after the message is  
25 displayed on the sub-display.

22. A message display method for a portable information apparatus, which comprises a main display,

a sub-display provided independently of the main display, and operation device for generating a plurality of kinds of events, comprising:

5 detecting an event for changing a name of application program from the operation device; and

10 displaying a name of an application program to be started on the sub-display in response to the event for changing the name of application program from the operation device instead of a name of other application program to be started displayed on the sub display in one of a power OFF state, sleep state, and main display OFF state.

15 23. A method according to claim 22, further comprising detecting an event for starting from the operation device; and

starting the application program to be started displayed on the sub-display in response to the detected event for starting.

20 24. A method according to claim 22, wherein information representing a state of the portable information apparatus is normally displayed on the sub-display in the power OFF state, sleep state, and main display OFF state, the method further comprising

25 displaying a name of an application to be started on the sub-display if an event for displaying the name of the application program to be started is generated from the operation device.

25. A method according to claim 24, further comprising

re-displaying the information representing the state of the portable information apparatus on the sub-  
display when a predetermined time has passed after the  
display control device displays the name of the  
application program to be started on the sub-display.

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